



**Testimony of Kia F. Murrell  
Associate Counsel, CBIA  
Before the Committee on General Law  
Hartford, CT  
March 6, 2012**

**S.B. 315 AA Prohibiting the Unnecessary Collection of Social Security Numbers**

Senator Doyle, Representative Taborsak and other members of the Committee, I am Kia Murrell, Associate Counsel at the Connecticut Business and Industry Association. CBIA represents more than 10,000 companies throughout the state of Connecticut ranging from large corporations to small start up businesses.

We generally oppose legislation that imposes new mandates on employers; increases the cost of doing business in the state; or that which makes it more difficult for companies to grow and operate in Connecticut. We find S.B. 315 to be a measure that does all of the above, and for those reasons we urge the Committee to reject it.

**Healthcare providers must use unique, personal identifiers to serve their customers effectively.**

S.B. 315 states:

(b) Except as provided in subsection (c) of this section, a person doing business in the state shall not request or collect from an individual such individual's Social Security number. The provisions of this subsection shall apply to: (1) group and individual health insurance policies providing coverage of the type specified in subdivisions (1), (2), (4), (6), (10) and (12) of section 38a-469 of the general statutes.

In prohibiting companies from collecting and using social security numbers in group and individual health insurance policies, S.B. 315 is overly broad and disregards the myriad of administrative and other uses of such information in the ordinary course of business. Moreover, this proposal ignores the necessity and importance of using such information as a unique, personal identifier for the hundreds of thousands of employees, customers, patients, and end users of the state's healthcare and insurance systems. For companies involved in or connected to healthcare services, social security numbers may be the only means of correctly indentifying patients, especially when serving two or more individuals of the same name. Without a doubt, the effects of administering healthcare and insurance services to the wrong individual can be costly and in some cases devastating.

**S.B. 315 should be narrowly tailored to address identity theft and protection only.**

Identity theft is a very serious problem that affects individuals and businesses alike, endangering private lives and Connecticut's economy. However, we believe that efforts to address identity theft should be specific and should not be so broad that they creates unintended consequences for companies in the ordinary course of their businesses. Rather, CBIA believes that efforts should be narrowly tailored to address specific, offensive activities that put citizens at risk while also minimizing the impact on businesses.

Businesses have legitimate reasons to collect personal identifying information such as social security numbers. So long as companies take precautions to safeguard that information, the practice of collecting it should not be banned, as doing so unnecessarily burdens normal business operations and can lead to confusion and negative consequences for both individuals and businesses involved in the health insurance.

For all of the reasons stated above, we strongly oppose SB 315.